

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Currently, claims 2-12 are pending in this application.

Objections to the Claims:

Claim 1 was objected to because of the following informality “there is no preposition after ‘unit’ and before ‘discharge’ in line 3 of claim 1.” Claim 1 has been canceled and the limitations thereof incorporated into now independent claim 2. Independent claim 2 requires, *inter alia*, “a discharge unit causing discharge of said accumulation unit.” Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the claims be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter:

The Office Action indicated that claims 2-4, 6, 7, 9 and 10 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but held that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this Amendment, claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form. Independent claim 2 is therefore allowable. Claims 3-12 depend directly or indirectly from claim 2 and are thus allowable. In summary, all pending claims (claims 2-12) are allowable.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1, 5, 8, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Noguchi in view of Hagiwara et al. As noted above, claim 1 has been canceled and claims 5, 8, 11 and 12 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency

MATSUBARA et al.
Application No. 10/022,412
November 23, 2005

from allowable independent claim 2. Applicant thus respectfully requests that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

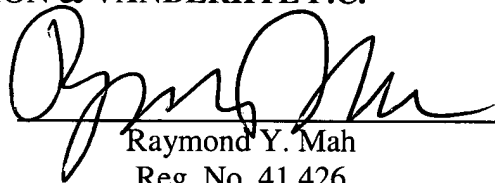
Conclusion:

Applicant believes that this entire application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests a notice to this effect. If the Examiner has any questions or believes that an interview would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Raymond Y. Mah', is written over a horizontal line.

Raymond Y. Mah
Reg. No. 41,426

RYM:sl
901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4044
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100